

4. (Amended) The method according to Claim 1, wherein the dietary fiber is selected from the group consisting of lignin, cellulose, hemicellulose, pectin, gums, arabic gum, carrageenan, waxes, resistant oligosaccharides, oligofructose, resistant polysaccharides, resistant starch and fructan.

5. (Amended) The method according to Claim 4, wherein the fiber is a fructan selected from the group consisting of levan, inulin and oligofructose.

6. (Amended) The method according to Claim 5, wherein the fiber is chicory inulin with an average degree of polymerization (\overline{DP}) of at least 20.

7. (Amended) The method according to Claim 6, wherein the fiber is chicory inulin with an average degree of polymerization (\overline{DP}) of at least 25.

8. (Amended) A method for the prevention of systemic infections in humans or vertebrates caused by pathogenic bacteria comprising administering to said humans or vertebrates a composition containing an effective amount of a dietary fiber or a mixture of dietary fibers.

Please add new Claims 15-22.

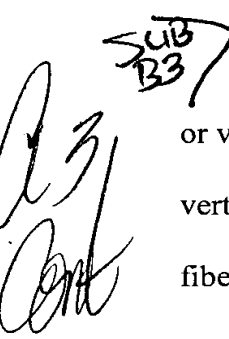
--15. (New) A method of manufacturing a food composition for prevention, inhibition and/or treatment of systemic infections in humans and vertebrates caused by pathogenic bacteria, comprising combining a dietary fiber or a mixture of dietary fibers with one or more ingredients of the food composition to form said food composition.

16. (New) The method according to Claim 15, wherein the dietary fiber is selected from the group consisting of lignin, cellulose, hemicellulose, pectin, gums, arabic gum, carrageenan, waxes, resistant oligosaccharides, oligofructose, resistant polysaccharides, resistant starch and fructan.

17. (New) The method according to Claim 16, wherein the fiber is a fructan selected from the group consisting of levan, inulin and oligofructose.

18. (New) The method according to Claim 17, wherein the fiber is chicory inulin with an average degree of polymerization (DP) of at least 20.

19. (New) The method according to Claim 18, wherein the fiber is chicory inulin with an average degree of polymerization (DP) of at least 25.

 20. (New) A method for the inhibition and/or treatment of systemic infections in humans or vertebrates caused by pathogenic bacteria comprising administering to said humans or vertebrates a composition containing an effective amount of a dietary fiber or a mixture of dietary fibers.

21. (New) The method of Claim 8, wherein the pathogenic bacteria is selected from the group consisting of *Clostridia*, *Bacteroides*, *Listeria*, *Candida* and *Salmonella*.

22. (New) The method of Claim 20, wherein the pathogenic bacteria is selected from the group consisting of *Clostridia*, *Bacteroides*, *Listeria*, *Candida* and *Salmonella*.--

REMARKS

Status of the Application

Claims 1-14 are pending in the present application. The Examiner rejects Claims 1-7 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, and Claims 1-14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). By this Amendment, Applicants have canceled Claims 2 and 3, amended Claims 1 and 4-8 and added new Claims 15-22. Applicants aver that no new matter has been added by the amendments to Claims 1 and 4-8 or by the addition of new Claims 15-22. In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the